

House Bill No. 6578 - An Act Concerning Participation in the Electoral Process; and Senate Bill No. 1017- An Act Concerning Election Administration

March 9th, 2021

Co-Chair Senator Flexer & C-Chair Representative Fox, and Ranking Members of the Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee:

My name is Eva Bermúdez Zimmerman and I ask you to support H.B. 6578 & S.B. 1017. I like you a voter. A scared rite of passage at 18. More important than getting your license or graduating High School. Why would categorize school or a car with higher value filling out a piece of paper, well simply because it allows to elect you. Our law makers who everyday make decisions on our behalf, to make our state and nation a better place to live. The electoral process is a right many fought for but still we see voter disenfranchisement. In Passing HB 6578, but with needed improvement, is extremely important because it codifies and expands Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) beyond the Dept. of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to other state agencies. This allows for more participation and less disenfranchisement. This law is just common-sense, an opportunity to reform and save taxpayers money while increasing voter participation.

This bill codifies AVR, as it is happening now at the Dept. of Motor Vehicles, into state law and I recognize that important first step. However we must also expand AVR to the Dept. of Social Services (DSS), HUSKY, Access Health CT, state colleges and universities and other state agencies.

Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) will enhance the security and integrity of our elections by eliminating outdated addresses and duplicate registrations through an automatic process—which will deliver the most accurate voter rolls to cities and towns. Eliminating duplicate registrations significantly reduces the workload for localities that could be susceptible to confusion on election day. As an organizer of fifteen years I've seen the voter list in our towns full of old information. In one occasion a husband telling me he received over ten calls asking for his wife, she had passed two years prior. Not only was it painful for him who was voice told me he was still grieving but a missed opportunity for each volunteer who could have used that time to call another voter. I wish I could say stories like this only happened a couple times in the many years of me volunteering. But unfortunately that is not the case.

Again Urge you to support these two bills, voters are counting on you to make this change. With 77% of Connecticut voters supporting Automatic Voter Registration in a recent Secure Democracy. Across the country, localities have saved an average of about \$3.54 in labor costs per registration by moving from a paper to an electronic method. Nineteen states have versions of AVR. H.B.6578 and S.B. 1017 are good public policy and voters are paying attention. It's time for a change.

Thank you,

Eva Bermúdez Zimmerman
Concerned Voter
New Milford, CT